



CALIFORNIA FATALITY ASSESSMENT & CONTROL EVALUATION PROGRAM  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

# PREVENTING FORKLIFT FATALITIES

**D**uring a recent nine-month period, forklifts crushed two California forklift operators to death. The operators parked their forklifts on concrete surfaces with small inclines. The operators did not set their parking brakes before getting off. The forklifts then rolled and pinned them against large, unmoving objects.

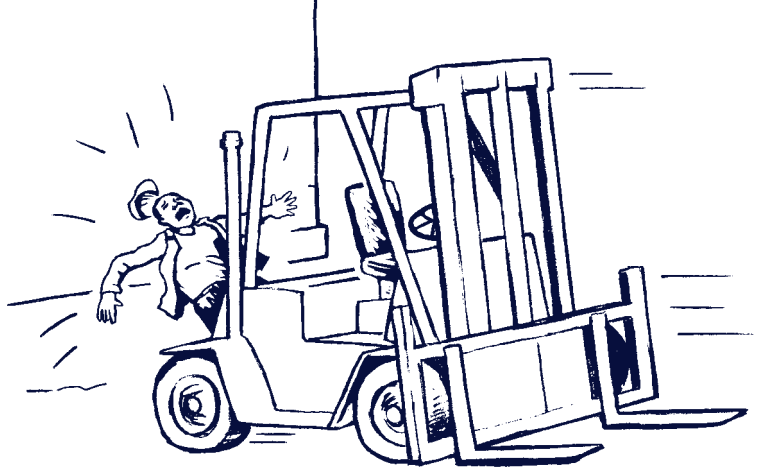
## CASE 1: The Unaware Truck Driver

**A** 39-year-old male truck driver died when he was crushed between a forklift and a flatbed trailer. The driver had parked the forklift on a sidewalk slightly higher than his truck. The driver went to straighten some pallets on the trailer. The forklift rolled forward. It pinned the driver between the edge of the trailer and the mast of the forklift. The operator was trained in forklift operation. However, the employer did not make sure he used forklift rules and regulations.

## CASE 2: The Untrained Operator

**A** 21-year-old male warehouseman died after being crushed between a forklift and the edge of the floor of a railroad boxcar. The warehouseman drove the forklift to the loading area of a loading dock. After he parked it he tried to open a boxcar door. The forklift rolled backwards toward the boxcar and fell partially over the edge. This pinned the operator between the edge of the floor of the boxcar and the rear of the forklift. The operator was a new employee who was not trained in forklift operation.

# RUNAWAY KILLER



## RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are for employers, forklift manufacturers and workers. If followed, they can help stop deaths caused by forklifts.

Employers should make sure that:

- ▶ Forklift operators follow the rules when they get off a forklift.
- ▶ Forklifts are regularly inspected.
- ▶ No one stands between parked forklifts and large, unmoving objects.
- ▶ New employees are not allowed to do new tasks until they are properly trained and tested in forklift operation.

Manufacturers should:

- ▶ Make forklifts with automatic parking brakes so that the brakes engage whenever no one is in the seat.

*For more information on the safe use of forklifts, refer to the California Code of Regulations, Title 8; subchapter 7, General Industry Safety Orders; Group 1, article 25; sections 3650 through 3664.*

For complete fatality reports of these or other cases, and information on the California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, contact the California Department of Health Services, Occupational Health Branch, FACE Program, 1515 Clay Street, Suite 1901, Oakland, CA 94612, or visit our website at [www.dhs.ca.gov/ohb/ohsep/face](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ohb/ohsep/face).

# PLEASE POST

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**FACE** is a public health program run by the California Department of Health Services (DHS) and funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). **FACE stands for "Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation."** The purpose of the **FACE** program is to find problems that may cause work-related deaths so that employers and employees can help prevent them.